

In and about Washington

January 2024
FREE—TAKE ONE



Santa and friends opened the holidays

Not even the Grinch or threatening showers could keep Santa and his friends from enjoying the food, music, and fun at the Christmas in Washington festival December 9.



Community festival next town party

Washington is throwing parties for itself that others are coming to enjoy.

That's indicated by the success of the annual Christmas in Washington celebration and of the Washington Community Festival set for March 23.

Both were originally proposed as festivals primarily for the town itself during the tricentennial year in 2020. Covid killed the original plans, but volunteer groups resurrected the ideas.

The Christmas festival began as a small affair built around a visit from Santa and tree lighting. This year it drew hundreds to festivities at the Town Pavilion and Ethel Park.

The Community Festival is a revival of one that was replaced a dozen years ago by a short-lived Catfish Festival. It features food, music, a car show, and activities for kids.

Both are administered through the nonprofit Steamboat City Association but are planned and staged by volunteer committees.

2-In and about Washington, January 2024

Of Note

THE ST. LANDRY Community Action Agency offers public transportation services for qualified people Monday-Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. throughout St. Landry and Lafayette Parishes. Call (337) 948-3651 for details.

THE WASHINGTON

Cemetery Foundation is accepting donations via the Venmo payment app. Donations may also be made by check to Town of Washington Cemetery Foundation, P.O. Box 42, Washington 70589.

THE HEALTH BUGGY offers free screening for blood pressure, blood sugar, and cholesterol from 8 to 11 a.m. each third Friday. on the Immaculate Conception parking lot.

BINGO IS BACK, at 2 p.m. on each second and fourth Tuesday at the Recreational Center on Martin Luther King.

Send items for *In and About Washington* to jimbradshaw4321@gmail.com.



Christmas concert

The Opelousas Queen of Angels choir sang at Washington's Christmas concert December 2 at the old St. John's Episcopal Church. The event is sponsored by the Washington Garden Club.



Town's 2020 census figures updated

The town has successfully challenged the 2020 census count that incorrectly found that Washington lost 200 people between the 2010 and 2020 population counts, and had a population of only 742.

The town used utility records and other data to show that the population is actually 1,156. That is important because it keeps Washington above the 1,000 residents needed to be classified as a town. That affects how much grant money a community can receive.

Hot and dry, but not the worst

Despite a scorching summer, 2023 was not the hottest and driest year ever in Washington.

We recorded just over 42 inches of rain in 2023, ranking it fourth over the last 25 years. The driest was 2005, with 40.24 inches. Next came 2013 (40.79) and 2010 (41.53).

Near year's end, our average temperature for the year was 69.8 degrees. The hottest year at Lafayette was 2017 at 71.5. In Alexandria, it was 1921 at 70.4. We usually fall between the two.

THE WEATHER December 1-27

High: 79, Dec. 9
Average High: 63.1
Low: 28, Dec. 11
Average Low: 42.3
Average Temp: 52.7
Dec. Rainfall: 3.86
Avg. for Dec.: 4.37
Rain for 2023: 42.51
20-year Avg.: 54.54



New Post Office Fence

Fence boards formed a pattern of triangles as they were stacked to be used by builders from Superior Fence of Acadiana to replace the 25-year-old fence erected when the post office moved in 1997.



Learning about Washington

Mayor Dwight Landreneau greeted the 6th-grade class from Westminster Christian Academy and gave a talk on the history of the town during a school trip to Washington at the end of November.

Sewer rate adjustment probably coming

An adjustment to Washington sewer rates is likely in the coming year, but not immediately

CPA Burton Kolder has suggested that the town needs to “really look at the sewer system” after the audit for the last fiscal year showed that it operated at a loss. At the same time, a sewer rate study required as part of a grant application found that the system needs to generate enough money to at least break even.

That study suggested that the town might consider increasing the rate by a small percentage each year.

Mayor Dwight Landreneau said that is one possibility but that no action will be taken until after a water rate study is done so that the two may be linked if any action is required. The water system operated at a small profit in the last fiscal year, according to Kolder.

The auditor noted that it costs substantially more to treat water that goes out of a kitchen or bathroom than the water that goes in.

Spiritual Trail

Washington’s three historic cemeteries are included on a new St. Landry Parish Spiritual Trail promoted by the parish tourist



From Town Hall

AN ELECTRICAL malfunction at the main box at the Washington water tower caused pressure to plummet to nearly nothing for several hours on December 18 and brought a boil water advisory for several days.

A CHANGE to electronic water meters is likely early this year. The grant money is in hand and the project is about ready to go out for bids.

THE JANUARY Town Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 16, due to the Martin Luther King holiday. The Council usually meets each third Monday at 6 p.m. Only routine matters were on the December agenda

UTILITY CUSTOMERS are reminded that bill payments are due on the 17th of each month and that payments received after 3 p.m. are posted on the next business day. A \$10 late fee is charged if the bill is not paid on time. A \$50 delinquent fee is assessed and utilities will be disconnected if the bill is not paid by the 22nd of the month.

4-In and about Washington, January 2024

Washington looked a lot like Christmas



Decorations brighten holiday

Strings of lights, welcoming Santas, and nativity scenes helped brighten the holidays here.

Southern Strands Beauty Salon, on Moundville across from the post office, won the business category of the Christmas decorating contest for the second year in a row. Washington State Bank placed second and Leger's Country Market was third.

Undratte Alexander, 412 South Main, was the residential winner. Tessie and Glenn Pitre, 537 Mayer St., were second, and Pam and Dwight Landreneau, 236 Dejean St., were third.

The Washington Garden Club coordinated the competition.



In and About
Washington

Member
FDIC

is underwritten by

